

# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 1997 CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S HEALTH SURVEY

As women grow older, the need for assistance often becomes more important to remaining healthy and independent. Health problems can limit a woman’s daily activities and the ability to take care of herself when she is ill. Older women in California are generally less well off financially than younger women. Many older women do not drive, which limits transportation. Social support—having someone available to help when assistance is needed—is necessary to maintain independent living and well-being. Social support can be a family member, friend, or relative who is available to lend a hand, a church or social group that helps out, or a community agency that offers assistance.

The 1997 California Women’s Health Survey asked 1151 women ages 55 and older if they had someone they could

count on if they needed help with every day activities, were in financial difficulty and needed to borrow a little money, were sick or injured and needed to stay in bed for a few days, or needed a ride to an appointment.

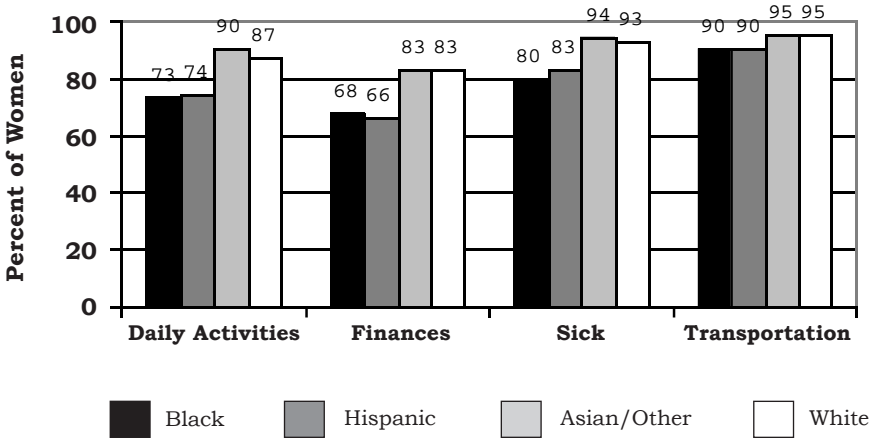
Overall, the majority of women had support with activities, finances, illness, and transportation. There were virtually no differences by age. Among all women ages 55 and older:

- 83–87% had someone they could count on to help with everyday activities.
- 80% had someone from whom they could borrow money.
- 90% had someone to help if they were sick or injured.
- 95–98% had someone they could call on for a ride.

## SOCIAL SUPPORT AMONG OLDER CALIFORNIA WOMEN

**CMRI (California Medical Review, Inc.)**

**Social Support Among Women Ages 55 and Older  
By Race/Ethnicity; California, 1997**



### Public Health Message:

For older women, there were some differences in the availability of support among different racial/ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic women indicated less support for all situations than Asian/Other and White women.

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